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Mark 15

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Learn the Bible at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Mark 15.

Topics.

- Jesus is delivered over to Pilate.
- Passover day and the Jewish High Sabbath.
- The King of the Jews.
- Pilate releases Barabbas.
- Roman soldiers mock and torture Jesus.
- Jesus is lead away to Golgotha and crucified.
- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
- The temple curtain torn from top to bottom.
- Joseph of Arimathea places the body of Jesus in a tomb.

The previous chapter: the previous chapter covered the two days before Passover Day and the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, a woman with an alabaster flask anointed Jesus body for burial. Jesus ate the Last Supper with the twelve apostles, then went with Peter James and John and prayed in Gethsemane. Judas betrayed Jesus and he was taken to the high priest, the chief priests, the elders and the scribes and condemned to death.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

MARK 15:1

Jesus is delivered over to Pilate.

- **Mark 15:1:** And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole Council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate.
- It is very early in the morning of Passover Day

Passover Day and the Jewish High Sabbath: The Sabbath Days that are mentioned regarding the Passover had nothing to do with the Jewish weekly Sabbath that the Jews kept every Saturday. Passover Day was an annual reminder and celebration that God delivered Israel from Egypt (the house of bondage) on the 14th Day of the month of Abib (also called Nisan) and it was on this day that God commanded the Jews to keep the Passover Feast, regardless of what day of the week it fell on, it had to be kept on the 14th Day of Abib.

The day after Passover Day was a Sabbath Day because it was the first day of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, so Passover Day and the Sabbath Day could have fallen on any day of the week. Obviously over their four-thousand years of keeping this feast there were times when it did fall on Saturday (the Jewish weekly Sabbath) when this happened it was called a High Sabbath (meaning double Sabbath). In regards to Jesus death and resurrection, the first Sabbath Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15th) did fall on Saturday, (the Jewish weekly Sabbath Day). We

know this because all four Gospels record that the two Mary's went to the tomb after the Sabbath Day near the dawn of the First Day of the week (Sunday) so it was a double Sabbath, called a High Sabbath (Matt. 28:1) (Mark 16:1-2) (Luke 24:1-5) (John 20:1-2). Two days before the Passover Feast the chief priests and the scribes began seeking how they could have Jesus killed.

MARK 15:2-5

The King of the Jews.

- **Mark 15:2-5:** And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." ³And the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." ⁵But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

The most powerful religious leaders of Jesus generation gather together and condemn the Lord, but they did not have the authority to have him put to death so they bind Jesus and deliver him over to Pilate the governor of Rome who did have the authority to have guilty criminals crucified. Jesus earlier in the garden of Gethsemane had asked his Father in prayer "If there was any other way mankind could be saved, let the horror of what he is about to face pass," but there was no other way. This is God's only eternal and foreordained plan for man's salvation so Christ surrendered his will to the will of his Father and never tried to defend himself before Pilate. How true are the prophetic words of Isaiah:

- He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth (Isaiah 53:7).

MARK 15:6-15

Pilate releases Barabbas

- **Mark 15:6-15:** Now at the feast (of Passover) he (Pilate) used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. ⁷And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. ⁸And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. ⁹And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. ¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. ¹²And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" ¹³And they cried out again, "Crucify him." ¹⁴And Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." ¹⁵So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.
- It is still early in the morning of Passover Day (Mark 14:12)

Pilate knew that Israel's most powerful religious leaders the chief priests, elders, scribes and the whole council envied the Lord Jesus Christ he knew they were jealous of his success and popularity with the common people. These religious leaders have kidnapped a man, perverted justice, condemned and innocent man and now to add to their crimes they stir up the crowds to demand the release of a known murderer. This shows the influence a few men (especially religious) with power can have over a multitude of people. Sadly, the common people tend to exalt and idolise others who are in high places of power which in turn gives those in authority enormous power and influence over the minds of the masses.

MARK 15:16-21

Roman Soldiers Mock and Torture Jesus.

- **Mark 15:16-21:** And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters) (Pilate) and they called together the whole battalion. ¹⁷And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. ¹⁸And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. ²⁰And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him. ²¹And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

Soldiers take Jesus inside the palace to Pilate's headquarters and an entire battalion (a mass of men) of Roman soldiers mock and cruelly torture him. Isaiah in chapter fifty-three foretold this:

- He was despised and rejected; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquity and we like sheep have gone astray; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth, but like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth (Isaiah 53:3-7).

After dressing the Lord up in royal robes and forcing a crown of thorns on his head to mock him as a king the soldiers take Jesus out to crucify Him and compel a stranger to carry his cross (Matt. 27:32) (Mark 15:21) (Luke 23:26).

MARK 15:22-26

Jesus is Lead Away to Golgotha and Crucified.

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- **Mark 15:22-25:** And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). ²³And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. ²⁵And it was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews."

Golgotha was a knoll an embankment or mound near Jerusalem it means the place of the skull, it was called Calvary. Golgotha is the Hebrew name for the place where Jesus was crucified.

(Matt. 27:33) (Mark 15:22) (John 19:17) (Luke 23:33).

Wine mixed with myrrh: prior to Jesus being nailed to the cross he was offered a drink mixed with myrrh (bitterness) (v23). This would certainly be in accordance with Solomon's instruction to give a cup of spiced wine or strong drink to those who were perishing (Proverbs 31:6-7), perhaps to help with their emotional and physical pain and as their last enjoyment of life, but it appears the cruelty and mocking of the soldiers had not ended as they deliberately mixed myrrh in with the wine making it bitter and sour for Jesus to drink.

The second time this drink was offered to him was while he was on the cross and just before he died (v36). The drink mixed with myrrh that they offered him, was literally foretold in (Psalm 69:21) showing that all the events that are taking place were a fulfilment of the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God

The dividing of his garments (v24) when they nailed Jesus to the cross, they stripped him of his garments (at least his upper garments) obviously if the garment was torn and divided it would be of no use to any one therefore, they agreed to cast lots for it. The following is a list of common reasons the men may have contented for Jesus garment:

- Because it was so fine and rich, that it was worth a considerable amount of money, but this idea does not flow in harmony with the poverty Christ appeared in.
- Perhaps they had heard of those that had been cured by touching the hem of his garment and they thought it have some healing power in it.
- They hoped to get money of his friends for such a sacred relic.
- Because, in contempt, mockery and scorn they would seem to put a value upon it, as royal clothing.
- They were simply playing a game of dice for the clothes as a diversion to pass away the time while they waited for Jesus to die.

Whatever the reason they cast lots for the Lords garment the word of God was accomplished as recorded in the first words of the famous Psalm of David in which it states:

- They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture (Psalm. 22:18).

This was never true of David, but certainly echoes Christ, of whom David (a prophet) in spirit spoke of. The fact that David by the Spirit was so accurate in speaking these words thousands of years before the event actually took place shows us that all the horrific events that took place leading up to the Lord's crucifixion was the fulfilment of the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Hours of the day: 6am Sunrise is the 1st hour of the day and then the 3rd 6th and 9th hours are counted from it. The 1st hour cannot be counted from sunset (6pm) because, if sunset is taken as the 1st hour and the 3rd 6th and 9th hours are counted from it, then the 3rd hour would be 9pm, the 6th hour would be midnight and the 9th hour would be 3am and it would be already dark, therefore when the Scriptures say, "it went dark" it would have no meaning, added to this, if Jesus died at 3am he would have been on the cross on the Jewish Sabbath Day. Therefore, on the 3rd hour (9am) Jesus was given over to be crucified, then at the 6th hour (12 noon) Jesus was crucified at Golgotha and darkness fell over all the land. Then at the 9th hour (3pm) Jesus breathed his last and gave up his life and the curtain of the temple was torn from top to bottom.

Sceptics and the title over Jesus head: sceptics say that the Bible is in error, because the title placed over Jesus head reads differently in the book of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. This is foolishness and a vain attempt to support their arguments that the Bible is full of contradictions, of course, it is not going to be word for word exact simply because each book is written by four different authors. Common sense will see that though they may use different words they all say the same thing (i.e., Jesus is the King of the Jews). Many people have been taught that the Bible is the inspired word of God and therefore every single word is inspired, but this is a mistaken idea, certainly the Bible contains the inspired word of God, but it is the messages the individual words teach that is inspired not the individual words themselves. Individual words form sentence and a paragraph etc., it is the messages that are taught by these sentences and paragraphs when individual words are put together that is the inspired word of God.

There are many Bibles that use different words, but all teach the same message, it is these messages that are inspired by God. If it was the individual words that were inspired the Bible could never be translated into other languages (i.e., Chinese, Mexican, Russian etc.), and remain inspired because these languages do not have the same individual words that the English language does. Added to this the original Manuscripts are written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, so none of us would be reading the inspired word of God but the good news is that every language on planet earth can use their own language and individual words to translate the messages that God has spoken.

The inscription on the Cross: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John record different inscriptions on the Cross:

Matthew says: This is Jesus the King of the Jews (Matt 27:37) (KJV).

Mark says: The King of the Jews (Mark 15:26) (KJV).

Luke says: This is the King of the Jews (Luke 23:38) (KJV).

John says: Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews (John 19:19) (KJV).

It probably read: This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews. Though all inscriptions are slightly different the message they proclaim is very clear.

MARK 15:27-28

Jesus was crucified with two Robbers.

- **Mark 15:27-28:** And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁸And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

These verses are alluding to the following verses of Isaiah: -

- Therefore I (God) will divide him (Christ) a portion with the many (believers) and he (Christ) shall divide the spoil with the strong (those that endure) because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors (Isaiah 53:12).

MARK 15:29-32

Jesus is Mocked while Nailed to the Cross.

- **Mark 15:29-32:** And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰save yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. ³²Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

These verses take the mind of the ardent Bible student to the following words in Psalm twenty-two:

- All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads (Psalm 22:7).

The wonder and beauty of little pearls like this is that in finding the single verse an entire treasure chest of verses is opened to the reader as the one verse takes the reader to an entire Psalm that is echoing the Lord Jesus Christ.

MARK 15:33-34

My God, my God, why have you Forsaken Me?

- **Mark 15:33-34:** And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

At the 6th hour there was darkness over the whole land until the 9th hour.

9am: is the 3rd hour (Jesus was nailed to the cross).

12pm (noon): is the 6th hour (There was darkness over the whole land).

3pm: is the 9th hour (this is when Jesus died).

Jesus was alive on the cross from 9am to 3pm that's a total of 6 hours and Pilate was still surprised to hear that he had already died, obviously crucifixion was a very slow and tremendously painful death (Mark 15:44).

"Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" These words of Jesus immediately take our minds to Psalm twenty-two which beautifully echoes Christ's crucifixion in the following words:

- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? All who see me mock me (v1) saying he trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him (v8). On you O'LORD was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God (v10) and now I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet, I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me and divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots (v14-18).

NOTE: Christ physically and literally died he could not resurrect himself; he like every other person to be resurrected had to trust in the promise of his heavenly Father to resurrect him from the grave to eternal glory. Mary, Jesus mother no-doubt taught him the Scriptures from a very young age and at only twelve years old he was in the temple teaching and everyone who heard him was amazed. He knew that the prophets and the volume of the Scriptures were written of him and had a clear understanding of what his destiny was and why he was on earth (Isaiah 53) (Psalm 22).

MARK 15:35-39

Jesus and Elijah.

- **Mark 15:35-39:** And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "Behold, he is calling Elijah." ³⁶And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." ³⁷And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

This is the second time Jesus is offered wine mixed with myrrh it takes our mind to the following words of Psalm sixty-nine, "They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink" The Psalm is of David expressing his heart to God in a time of trouble, but it also echoes the heart and mind of the Lord Jesus Christ. For further details see the title, "Wine Mixed with Myrrh," following (Mark 15:22-25).

The temple curtain torn from top to bottom: during the Old Testament and under the Old Covenant and the Levitical Priesthood only the high priest could go in behind the curtain which covered the Ark of the Covenant (symbolising God's Presence) in the Holy of Holies in the temple of God and even then he could only enter God's Most Holy Place once a year. The curtain being torn from top to bottom symbolises the entire Old Covenant and the Levitical priesthood being done away with. Since Christ's death and resurrection no-one needs a human high priest to intercede for them. Jesus Christ became the perfect and eternal High Priest for whoever would come to him. Jesus is the only mediator anyone needs to stand between them and God, through Jesus everyone can enter into the Presence of God. The Roman centurion was so impressed with the way Christ died he declared:

- Truly this man was the Son of God!

MARK 15:40-41

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome.

- **Mark 15:40-41:** There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome were looking on from a distance fulfilling the following words of Psalm thirty-eight:

- My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague, and my nearest kin stand far off (Psalm 38:11).

Mary Magdalene: was the woman possessed of devils, but delivered by Jesus she was present at the crucifixion, at the sepulchre and recognised Jesus after the resurrection.

Mary wife of Cleophas and mother of James and Joses: was at the sepulchre, assisted in preparing the body of Jesus for burial and was a witness of the resurrection.

Salome: probably lived in the vicinity of Bethsaida, she was the wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John and one of the women who accompanied Jesus in Galilee to minister to him. She was present at the crucifixion and among those who on Sunday morning came to the tomb to anoint the dead body of Jesus.

MARK 15:42-47

Joseph of Arimathea places the Body of Jesus in a Tomb.

- **Mark 15:42-47:** And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath ⁴³Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the Council (an honourable counsellor in KJV) who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. ⁴⁵And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. ⁴⁶And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.
- It is now early evening (very late afternoon) of Passover Day (14th) (v12).

NOTE: Passover Day was also called the Day of Preparation because the seven Day Feast of Unleavened Bread immediately followed it. The first day of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread is almost upon them so they needed to remove the body of Jesus from the cross before the Jewish Sabbath began at twilight (sunset). The Sabbath Days that are mentioned regarding the Passover had nothing to do with the Jewish weekly Sabbath that the Jews kept every Saturday.

The day after Passover Day was a Sabbath Day, because it was the first day of the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread so it could have fallen on any day of the week because Passover Day had to always be held on the 14th Day, nevertheless on this occasion it did fall on Saturday, (the Jewish

weekly Sabbath Day). We know this because all four Gospels records that the two Mary's went to the tomb after the Sabbath Day near the dawn of the First Day of the week (Sunday) so it was a double Sabbath and being such was called a High Sabbath.

(Matt. 28:1) (Mark 16:1-2) (Luke 24:1-5) (John 20:1-2).

Joseph of Arimathea: Pilate has just given Jesus over to be crucified, there was no way Joseph could know beforehand if Pilate would accept him kindly or have him also put to death, thus the reason we are told Joseph had to gather up courage to go to him, this also shows us that Joseph greatly respected Jesus. Joseph of was an adviser or a special councillor of the Jewish Sanhedrin council at Jerusalem (Mark 15:43) (Luke 23:50-51). The Sanhedrin council was the highest Jewish tribunal during the Greek and Roman periods it is often mentioned in the New Testament where the Greek name is always in the English version translated council. It was made up of chief priest's scribes and the elders and became more and more represented by the Pharisees as they grew in importance. They exercised civil jurisdiction according to Jewish law and also criminal law (with certain limitations) in the time of Christ and were the final court of appeal for all questions connected with the Mosaic Law. This shows us that not every Jewish man in a high position of religious authority was opposed to the Lord.

Joseph respect for the Lord: how amazing is this, not one of Jesus disciples have even considered burying Jesus, but Joseph a man we know very little about not only was prepared to risk his life to give the Lord a respectful burial he comes with a linen shroud to wrap him in. Joseph carries the body of the Lord to a tomb and covers it with a stone while Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of José's watch. There are no-doubt many in the Kingdom of God like Joseph who because of their positions in life are forced to mix with those who are opposed to the Lord, they have no glory in religious circles and are never mentioned, but though they may not be recognised by others God sees the beauty of their heart. It is absolutely certain that God and all the angels in heaven were rejoicing while they watched this humble man name Joseph of Arimathea take the beaten and bloody body of Jesus in his arms and carry him to a tomb so that Christ would have a respectful Jewish burial.

For further information see:

- Matthew 27 in, Commentary NT (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- Passover in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- Three Days and Three Nights in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.